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ABSTRACT

Freshmen enrolled in regular and remedial sections of English were surveyed to determine the amount of instruction and practice in expository composition received during high school. Results showed that the total amount of instruction was relatively low for both groups of students: only 15% of remedial students and 25% of regular English students reported instruction in selected aspects of writing during each semester of high school. However, regular English students had received significantly more instruction overall; their greatest superiority occurred in the amount of instruction in content development and organization and in a greater emphasis on exposition. Course-selection patterns revealed that remedial students tended to include fewer semesters of English in their programs, while regular English students not only enrolled in more semesters of English classes, but also tended to select courses specifically designed to increase their expository writing skill. (Author/AA)

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Composition Instruction Does Make a Difference: A Comparison of the High School Preparation of College Freshmen in Regular and Remedial English Classes[1]

Introduction

Evidence that fewer students are learning to write effectively has been accumulating within the last two years. Comparing 1968 and 1974 National Assessment writing data of 9, 13, and 17 year olds, Mellon (1976) concluded that there was "meaningful across-the-board evidence of decreased writing ability in 1974 as compared with 1969. (p. 71)." Winterowd and Lloyd-Jones, the Assessment's consultants, found no decline in mechanics or editing skills, but concluded that the data showed evidence of decreases in coherence and syntactic fluency. (Winterowd, personal communication, 1976). Declining SAT Verbal and English Composition scores along with complaints from colleges and universities also suggest that the number of entering freshmen unable to write at an acceptable level is increasing. At the University of California, for example, which admits only the top 12½% of California high school graduates, almost half of the 1974-75 freshmen at the two largest campuses, Berkeley and Los Angeles, were required to take Subject A, a remedial composition course.

Numerous theories have been advanced to explain the increase in "written illiteracy." Some blame cultural phenomena and

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changing attitudes toward language use, hypothesizing that inadequate writing skills result from growing up in a society more oriented toward oral than written language and more reliant on television and other media than on print. From what we know about language learning, the language structures and levels of style controlled by students are almost certainly influenced by the oral language models of popular music, motion pictures, and television. However, if societal forces are primarily responsible for the decline in quality of student writing, any attempt to improve writing through instruction must be regarded as futile. Societal trends and values lie beyond our control as educators, for teachers can no more direct the tides of cultural change than King Canute could restrain the tides of Britain. Only through the curriculum and instruction they provide can teachers hope to affect their students' writing achievement.

Status of the English Curriculum

Knowledge about the English curriculum in general and composition instruction in particular is actually quite limited. Only a few researchers have undertaken national surveys on high school English curriculum and instruction, and no systematic surveying exists to allow us to trace trends in the English curriculum. In the most extensive survey conducted, Squire and Applebee (1966) found that the amount of time devoted to composition was low (about 17%) and observed little evidence of either composition instruction or revision. However, composition was integrated within each English class, rather than taught as a separate subject.

Results from Hillock's (1972) more recent survey of high school elective programs suggested that the components of the English curriculum were becoming increasingly compartmentalized, and composition instruction appeared to be confined primarily to classes specifically designated as such. Hillock found that literature electives, although requiring analytical papers, minimized prewriting activity and direct composition instruction. He estimated that composition courses, including journalism, made up only 15 per cent of the total English course offerings.

Insights from Composition Research

A survey of the results from composition research yields, at first glance, only a bewildering mosaic of conflicting findings with some studies reporting significant improvement and others showing little change in writing skills. A closer look reveals substantial differences across studies in the independent and dependent variables considered. For example, one study measures improvement only in spelling and punctuation, while another assesses overall writing improvement. Equally important, studies vary widely in the types of independent variables considered. One study investigates the effect of writing frequency, another the effect of revision, and still another the effect of evaluation on student writing. Given these differences across studies, inconsistent findings are hardly surprising. The important question is whether some pattern exists, hidden among the apparent disorder. When the results of studies which explore the effects of similar variables are compared, a pattern does emerge: some writing variables are consistently associated

with improved writing skills, while others appear to be unable, by themselves, to raise the level of writing proficiency.

One major category of composition research studies is concerned specifically with the effect of various types of and approaches to grammar instruction. Numerous studies have investigated the relationship between the study of formal grammar and writing. Although these studies were able to show that students performed better on objective tests of formal grammar or increased their ability to diagram sentences, none found that a study of formal grammar improved writing (Braddock et al., 1963). The ineffectiveness of formal grammar study, whether based on traditional or transformational grammar, has been reconfirmed recently in a study conducted in New Zealand (Elley, et al., 1976). This study, which compared the effect of studying traditional grammar, transformational grammar, or no grammar, could find no significant differences in writing achievement between groups after three years.

Some research studies concerned with the effect of grammar instruction have succeeded in showing that a particular method improves some aspects of writing significantly. All of these methods were characterized by a functional or applied approach in which instruction is based on student errors and encourages the use of correct forms in speech and writing. Early studies by Lyman (1931), Fellows (1930), and Butterfield (1945) taught students to apply spelling, capitalization, or punctuation rules to their own writing through the process of guided revision. Harris (1962) conducted a two year study which compared the effect of instruction in formal grammar with the effect of

applied or functional grammar instruction on the number and type of mechanical errors and the types and complexity of sentence patterns in student essays. All significant differences between the two groups favored the applied method, and his study offers the most conclusive support for an applied approach to traditional grammar.

Three research studies have explored the effect of transformational grammar on student writing, especially its ability to increase syntactic fluency and control. A two year study by Bateman and Zidonis (1966) placed primary emphasis on the formal study of transformational grammar, using sentence combining exercises only as supplementary practice. Although the transformational grammar class was superior to the traditional grammar class in the number of well-formed sentences produced, briefer experiments by Mellon (1969) and O'Hare (1973) which placed greater emphasis on sentence combining practice obtained more impressive results. O'Hare actually eliminated grammar study and terminology completely. In his experiment, students successfully worked sentence combining problems which gave only the base sentences and the structure words required to make the embedding or insertion. Students relied on their intuitive knowledge of English sentence structure rather than on transformations rules to produce the new sentence structures. These three studies considered together suggest that the application of principles of transformational grammar - sentence combining practice in which students practice generating more complex forms - rather than the study of transformational grammar per se accounted for increased fluency.

A second type of composition research has investigated the effect of such variables as writing frequency, type and intensity of evaluation, revision, and various methods of instruction (defined here as providing either activities or guidelines which help students select and focus their topic, develop and arrange details or arguments during the writing or prewriting period). Some of these variables were consistently found to be associated with significant writing improvement, while others were found to be ineffective or effective only under certain conditions.

Two variables which, by themselves, have failed to result in improved writing performance are writing frequency and teacher evaluation. Although no one suggests that students can learn to write without writing, increasing only writing frequency has failed to result in significant improvement even when high frequency writing groups wrote four times as often as low frequency groups (Wolf, 1966· McColly and Remstad, 1963). Several studies have compared the effect of various types of or intensities of evaluation in combination with increased writing frequency. Burton and Allen (1963) compared high and low frequency writing groups who received either high or low intensity of teacher evaluation. They found no combination produced significant results. Adding a general evaluative comment at the end of an essay (Buxton, 1958) or providing 1:1 immediate feedback tutoring (McColly and Remstad, 1963) for high frequency writing groups also failed to produce significant results.

These studies do not, of course, indicate that students should not write essays or that teachers should not evaluate student papers. They do show, however, that writing frequency

and teacher evaluation - two facets of the writing process which have received considerable attention - are, by themselves, unable to improve writing. Other variables, either alone or combined with writing practice and/or teacher evaluation, have been more successful in developing writing skill.

One variable which has consistently produced significant differences between experimental and control groups is revision. Maize (1952), Buxton (1958) and McColly and Remstad (1963) all combined guided revision with increased writing frequency to achieve significant results. Methods of guiding revision varied considerably: Maize used in-class teacher and peer evaluation, Buxton relied on intensive teacher evaluation, and McColly and Remstad used both teacher and peer evaluation. Even though no conclusions about the superiority of one revision process over another are warranted, these three studies suggest that the revision process itself, which gives students an opportunity to make immediate application of suggestions for improvement, is critical in improving student writing.

The other variable consistently producing significant results is instruction (Rhoman and Wlecki, 1964; McColly and Remstad, 1963; Widvey, 1971; Sanders and Littlefield, 1975). Again, instructional methods varied among studies so no conclusions can be drawn about the superiority of any one approach. However, all methods shared the goal of helping students generate, develop, and organize their ideas during the prewriting or writing period. The writing of instructed students was then compared with that of uninstructed or conventionally instructed

students, and, in all cases, the instructed students were found to be superior, suggesting that instructional guidelines enabled them to become more effective writers.

Composition research demonstrates that several approaches to teaching writing consistently increase writing skill: (1) instruction and/or revision combined with writing practice, and (2) applied or functional grammar instruction. One would, therefore, expect students who received more writing instruction of this type to be better writers than those who do not.

Purpose of the Study

The present study, conducted among entering freshmen at the University of California, Los Angeles (U.C.L.A.), during October, 1975, assessed the high school composition instruction of some of California's most academically successful high school graduates. High school expository composition instruction and practice was compared for two groups of writers: "more successful" writers - those able to enroll directly in English 1 - and "less successful" writers - those required to enroll in Subject A, a remedial English class. The basic assumption guiding the study was that the high school composition curriculum does affect the level of writing skill a student brings to the university and that a comparison between more and less successful writers would reveal that more successful writers had greater opportunity to learn certain expository writing skills than did less successful writers.

Survey data was collected to answer the following research questions:

1. How much and what kind of composition instruction did students receive during high school?
2. What types of writing practice were emphasized?
3. What are the major differences between the composition instruction and practice received by English 1 and Subject A students?
4. Do some students appear to select high school English programs which might increase or decrease the amount of composition instruction received?

Procedures

During the first two weeks of Fall Quarter, 1975, 122 entering freshmen enrolled in ten sections of English 1 and 156 freshmen enrolled in seven sections of Subject A at U.C.L.A. completed a questionnaire developed and validated by the investigator during Spring Quarter, 1975. The first part of the questionaire consisted of a checklist to obtain information on the students' high school English program, including the total number of semesters of English classes, the number of elective classes, as well as the number of particular types of English classes (i.e., literature, expository writing, speech, etc.). The second part of the survey, as shown in Table 1, asked students to indicate the number of semesters of instruction in nine aspects of writing and to rank the three most frequent types of writing practice during high school.

Insert Table 1 about here

All freshman enrolled in English 1 or Subject A sections had been previously assigned to these classes on the basis of a two-stage screening procedure. A score of 600+ on the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) English Achievement Test automatically placed a student in an English 1 class. Those students scoring below 600 were subsequently classified as English 1 or Subject A students on the basis of their performance on a screening examination conducted by the Subject A Department. This examination consisted of a 40 minute objective exam followed by an impromptu expository essay. The Director and staff of the Subject A Department read and evaluated all essays. Group training sessions preceded the evaluations to establish criteria for passing and failing essays and inter-rater reliability. The reliability co-efficient was not formally calculated, but the training sessions were continued until the Director of Subject A was satisfied that criteria were clearly understood and until substantial agreement was reached.

Students were sampled by class section. Although random selection of classes was not possible, the factor most likely to affect enrollment in a particular section, time of day, was controlled by selecting at least one section of Subject A and English 1 each hour between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Of the 278 students included in the study, 53 or 19 per cent were classified as English 1 students on the basis of their CEEB scores alone. The remaining students were placed in English 1 or Subject A on the basis of the Subject A screening exam.

Scoring Procedures

Students reported the number of semesters of instruction

received in each of the nine aspects of writing and ranked the three most frequent types of writing practice. (See Table 1) A student could receive from 0-3 points for the amount of instruction received in each aspect of writing (a maximum of 27 points for all nine aspects) and from 0-5 points for writing practice. Points awarded for instruction were based on the number of semesters reported. For example, if a student reported receiving instruction in "supporting ideas with examples" during 5 or 6 semesters, he received 3 points. Two points were awarded for 3 or 4 semesters of instruction, and one point for 1-2 semesters. Students also ranked the three most frequent types of writing practice, selected from a list containing three types of expository practice (writing short expository essays, writing research papers, and writing essay exams), two types of nonexpository practice (personal and creative writing as described in Table 1), and a type which primarily gave practice in copying or summarizing (answering questions about my reading). Points were awarded only for rankings of expository writing practice. All rankings of practice in writing research papers and essay exams and a ranking of third for short expository essays received one point. A ranking of first or second for practice in writing short expository essays, which was weighted more heavily, received three and two points respectively. The amount of expository composition instruction and practice for each student was calculated by totalling points received for all nine aspects of writing and adding them to points received for expository writing practice. The resulting composite variable or index was used in the subsequent data analysis comparing

English 1 and Subject A students. In addition, the nine aspects were grouped into three skill clusters: content development and organization (Items b, d, f, h), writing style (Items a, e, i), and correct written form (Items c and g). Differences in instructional emphasis were compared by totaling the points for each subskill cluster.

Results

Mean scores for English 1 and Subject A students on the composition instruction and practice index were calculated and tested for the significance of the difference using the *t* statistic. Results indicated that English 1 students received significantly higher scores ($p < .002$) than Subject A students. The index was next divided into four components in order to compare the instructional emphasis in content development and organization, writing style, correct written form, and expository writing practice received by the two groups. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 about here

Notice that two components - expository writing practice and instruction in content development and organization - contributed most to the superiority of English 1 students and that the two groups of writers showed the smallest difference in the amount of instruction received in correct written form - grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Students also completed a check list which asked them to identify the number and type of classes in their high school English program. Frequencies were tabulated to determine the number of semesters of English and the types of English classes included in their programs. Inspection of the frequencies obtained revealed some differences in patterns of program selection. English 1 students selected more semesters of English and were more likely to include expository writing or English skills classes in their programs. Subject A students, on the other hand, selected fewer semesters of English and were more likely to select literature and creative writing classes. English 1 and Subject A programs were compared by the use of 2 x 2 contingency tables and the significance of the difference tested by the chi square statistic. Results are presented in Table 3.

Insert Table 3 about here

The analysis indicated that the number of semesters of English selected by English 1 students was significantly greater than that selected by Subject A students. Apparently, Subject A students reduced their high school composition instruction by reducing their total English instruction. In addition, differential patterns of course selection had suggested that English 1 students were selecting in favor of additional composition instruction and Subject A students in favor of nonexpository writing or literature courses. However, these

differences were not large enough to reach the .05 level of significance. Practically speaking, however, the .06 level obtained in comparing the number of expository writing or English skills classes for English 1 and Subject A students means that the differences obtained would occur by chance six times rather than five times out of 100. Moreover, the gamma (a measure of the strength of association between two variables) obtained was .37, indicating that a moderately strong relationship existed between classification as an English 1 or Subject A student and the selection of classes specifically intended to develop expository writing skill. We should, therefore, entertain the possibility that English 1 students, as a result of their own choice or of the requirements of their high school, not only included more semesters of English in their programs, but also may have selected a program which would provide additional instruction in composition.

Discussion

For the academically successful high school graduates in this study, a student's high school English curriculum appears to contribute to his proficiency in expository writing. Whatever the other factors affecting the learning of writing skills, freshmen entering U.C.L.A. were more likely to meet the university's freshmen writing standards if they had more opportunity to learn expository writing during high school.

Obviously, other factors (such as the quality of instruction, the student's aptitude and motivation) also affect a student's learning. However, research indicates that the amount

of time provided for learning is also important. For example, the IEA studies clearly revealed that the school variable most affecting student performance in the acquisition of those skills which are dependent on instruction and which cannot be acquired through normal exposure to the media or to the environment was the variable of opportunity to learn (Purves, 1976).

We do not know how the amount of instruction received by these 1975 entering freshmen might compare with that received by those of five years ago. We can observe, however, the emphasis on composition instruction for present students. The number of semesters of instruction reported for each writing aspect indicated that, for many students, instruction in writing is not received every semester of high school. Even though English 1 students, as a group, reported more instruction for each aspect of writing, the amount of instruction was relatively low for all students. With the exception of grammar instruction, less than half of the Subject A students received as many as three or more semesters of instruction for any writing aspect. Even among English 1 students, there was no aspect for which two-thirds of the students received three or more semesters of instruction. Much smaller percentages of students received instruction in any of the aspects of writing for five or six semesters. Generally, between 10-15 per cent of Subject A students and between 20-25 of English 1 students received instruction for this many semesters. Clearly, expository composition instruction is not provided every semester for a majority of students, and the amount of instruction might be profitably increased for all students.

A look at the patterns of instructional emphasis revealed by the analysis suggests several approaches to improving composition instruction for college preparatory students. English 1 students received significantly more instruction in content development and organization, an area of vital importance in exposition. Expository writing demands that the writer focus his main idea, then develop arguments and arrange them effectively. No clear consensus exists as to how one may best teach this critical skill. Moffett (1968), for example, is opposed to preteaching problems and solutions or preventing students from making errors. Instead students should receive extensive feedback from teachers or peers during the writing process to help shape and develop the final product. Others (Rohman and Wlecki, or Young, Becker and Pike) have developed hueristic schemes which help writers generate and organize ideas during the pre-writing stages of the composing process.

Whatever the method or combination of methods used, providing guided prewriting and/or revision activities consumes considerable time, and teachers who allocate more time to this type of composition instruction will undoubtedly have to reduce the amount of time spent on other components of the English curriculum. If teaching expository writing is given a high instructional priority, time must be reserved to teach students to develop and organize ideas as this ability is critical to the success of a piece of expository writing.

Even within the rather limited definition employed in this study, writing style received by far the lowest instructional

emphasis for all students. Although this may seem a defensible instructional priority, considering the other writing problems found in high school compositions, students need help in learning to distinguish between language forms and structures acceptable in speech but not in writing. Students, bombarded by oral language models which are often informal in style and highly colloquial, have difficulty in controlling a level of style appropriate in exposition. Aspects included within the writing style cluster (selecting appropriate diction, writing concisely, and improving sentence structure) are well within the ability of academically successful high school students and deserve greater emphasis.

Although the public and the popular press have suggested writing problems should be attacked by a "return to the basics" of grammar instruction, the data obtained in this study failed to support the assumption that students are not receiving grammar instruction. Quite the contrary, the percentage of students receiving three or more semesters of instruction in grammar is higher than for any other aspect of writing: 58 per cent of English 1 students and 53 per cent of Subject A students. Furthermore, the difference in the amount of grammar instruction received by the two groups is quite small. One may speculate as to whether the greater deficiencies in grammar and mechanics found in the writing of Subject A students should be attributed to too little instruction or to ineffective instruction.

Time constraints prevented asking students detailed questions about the procedures or methods used in each semester of

grammar instruction. However, research has consistently shown that an applied approach based on student errors and integrated with the total writing process improves writing, while grammatical rules learned through formal grammar study and studied apart from writing fail to transfer to later writing tasks and result in no significant improvement. Few teachers would attempt to teach content development and organization apart from the actual writing of an essay, but it is all too easy to routinely assign exercises from a grammar book. Among Subject A students, especially, grammar appears to have been taught in isolation from other writing aspects. Although 53 per cent of Subject A students reported three or more semesters of grammar instruction, only 43 per cent reported this much instruction in the aspects of writing related to content development and organization. English 1 students, on the other hand, reported almost as much instruction in content development and organization as in grammar with 55 per cent reporting three or more semesters in content development and organization and 58 per cent in grammar. This pattern suggests that English 1 students may have studied grammar more frequently in conjunction with the total writing process.

The greater emphasis on expository writing practice for English 1 students constituted one of the major differences between English 1 and Subject A students. English 1 students received more expository practice overall, but the most important difference occured in the rankings given to practice in writing the short expository essay, the type offering the greatest opportunity for combined instruction and practice.

Almost all - 95 per cent - of English 1 students ranked short expository essays as one of the three most frequent types of writing practice in comparison with 70 per cent of Subject A students. Although a majority of students did report a substantial emphasis on expository writing, an imbalance between expository and nonexpository writing practice appeared to exist for some students, especially those required to take Subject A. Subject A students, for example, were more likely than English 1 students to rank one of the nonexpository forms of writing (i.e., personal or creative) as their most frequent type of writing practice.

The interest in teaching nonexpository writing and the awareness of the values such writing may have in increasing student interest in writing and in developing writing skills has expanded in this country in the years since the Dartmouth conference, and more nonexpository writing has been incorporated into the curriculum. Returning to a writing curriculum which concentrates almost exclusively on exposition would be undesirable, but composition teachers should not ignore the fact that expository and nonexpository writing have different purposes which result in quite different demands on the writer. To use Britton's (1970) terminology, nonexpository writing uses language in the spectator role while expository writing uses langauge in the participant role. In the spectator role, the writer is concerned with past or imagined events, not those now taking place, and is concerned with them per se. In the participant role, language is used as a means to accomplish some practical purpose in the here and now. From these two roles arise two different functions of language:

from the spectator role, the poetic function; from the participant role, the transactional function. In the poetic function, material is ordered and selected according to inner demands and the writer heightens or intensifies the "implicit" through the formal arrangement of language. In the transactional function, the writer is pressured to be more "explicit" and material is ordered and selected according to outside demands.

College and university writing is almost exclusively in the expository mode. Whether the primary objective of the secondary English curriculum should be to train students in the "transactional" function of language, is, of course, a separate issue. If, however, one accepts "college preparation" as an important goal, expository writing will receive at the least equal, if not greater, emphasis than nonexpository writing in the English curriculum.

Present concern about the teaching of composition is helpful insofar as it reaffirms the importance of learning to write and the need to teach students to write. However, the concern may be harmful if overly simplistic solutions are adopted in an attempt to improve writing. Successful writers in this study appeared to write better because their high school English programs provided more opportunity to learn. Moreover, the curriculum emphases which contributed most to their superiority were practice in expository writing and instruction in content development and organization. The findings of this study, therefore, have implications for all concerned with the English instruction of high school students.

Providing more instruction and practice in expository composition can potentially increase the writing proficiency of many students who enter college with inadequate skill. Special attention needs to be given to increasing the instructional emphasis on content development and organization and on writing style. If this instruction is confined largely to evaluative comments on completed essays, the suggestions are unlikely to be implemented unless the student thoroughly revises his essay. Instruction is likely to be more effective if it occurs during the composing process as students are more likely to incorporate suggestions into the work in progress. Organizing the English classroom into a writing workshop in which students have some flexibility in moving through the various stages of composing, as well as an opportunity to obtain responses from the teacher and fellow students on their writing as it progresses creates a structure which facilitates instruction during the writing process.

Before increasing the amount of instructional time spent on grammar and mechanics, English departments should examine the instructional methods currently being used. Research has consistently shown that an applied approach to grammar (which bases instruction on common student errors and relies heavily

on examples from student writing) yields better results than formal grammar study. The most efficient means of implementing an applied approach to grammar will probably use some form of diagnosis/prescription, providing group instruction for the most common student errors and using programmed or self-instructional materials for less common errors.

Finally, departments must seek ways to ensure a balance in the amount of expository and nonexpository writing practice provided. Within general English classes, individual teachers can monitor the relative emphasis given to these two types of practice. Within the elective classes, departments can place some type of limit on a student's course selection by conducting yearly department-wide evaluations of each student's writing ability. Only students who demonstrate their proficiency in expository writing could select electives offering no composition instruction (i.e., speech or drama) or those emphasizing nonexpository modes in place of English classes which emphasize exposition.

So much has been written concerning the negative effect of present social and cultural forces on the deterioration of student writing, a reaffirmation of the role played by the English curriculum seems essential. After all, high school English departments can do relatively little to redirect a society increasingly oriented toward oral language or to reduce a student's exposure to television and other mass media. However, instruction and practice in writing are within the teacher's span of control and can be affected by curricular changes. For some students in this study, the amount of instruction and practice

in expository composition did make a difference. It could make a difference for many more.

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Table 1

Questionnaire Items Measuring Composition Instruction and Types of Writing Practice During High School (Grades 10-12)

How many semesters of English gave you instruction in each of the following aspects of writing. Instruction includes lessons or explanations by the teacher, class exercises, discussions, and assignments. Check one box for each aspect.

Aspects of Writing	How Many Semesters of English Classes? Most or All (5-6 sem.)	Many (3-4 sem.)	Some (1-2 sem.)	None (0 sem.)
a. Choosing the right word to express your ideas	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Supporting your ideas with examples	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Spelling correctly	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Clearly stating your topic or thesis	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Being concise (not using too many words)	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Using correct grammar and punctuation	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Learning when to begin and end paragraphs	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Revising the structure of your sentences	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thinking back on all the writing you were asked to do in your high school English classes, please rank the 3 types you were asked to do most often. Use 1 for the type you did most often. Rank only 3.

_____a. Personal writing (keeping a journal, retelling past experiences, writing about my feelings and impressions)
_____b. Expository essays (explaining ideas, defending a point of view, analyzing or discussing literature)
_____c. Writing answers to questions about my reading or summaries of my reading.
_____d. Creative writing (writing short stories, poems, plays scripts, etc.)
_____e. Research or library term papers
_____f. Writing essay exams
_____g. Other (please explain) _____

TABLE 2

Mean Scores for English 1 and Subject A Students

on Composition Index and on Index Components

(N = 264)

Instructional Comparison	Mean Score		Significance of the Differences	
	Subject A	English 1	t	p
Composition Index	15.7078	18.1140	3.11	.002
Index Components				
Writing Style	3.98	4.45	1.75	.08
Content Development/ Organization	6.02	6.98	2.84	.005
Correct Written Form	3.10	3.35	1.23	.21
Expository Writing Practice	2.61	3.33	3.99	.0001

TABLE 3

Comparison of High School English Programs

of English 1 and Subject A Students

(N = 264)

Program Comparison	X^2 (degrees of freedom=1)	Probability
Semesters of English selected	5.07	.02*
Semesters of literature and creative writing classes selected	.58	.44**
Semesters of expository writing or English skills classes selected	3.35	.06*

*More semesters selected by English 1 students

**More semesters selected by Subject A students